

# THE RED LANE

By HOLMAN DAY  
 A Romance of the Border

Author of "King Spruce," "The Ram-  
 rodders," "The Skipper and the  
 Skipped," etc.

## READ THIS FIRST

Vetal Beaulieu keeps an inn on the Maine-Canadian border; caters to smugglers and lends the peasants money on their farms and cattle. His daughter Evangeline, educated in a convent, returns home unexpectedly, rebels against the nature of his business, refuses to marry Dave Rol, leader of a band of border smugglers, whom her father has chosen for her, leaves home and becomes a teacher in a school at Attegat. Norman Aldrich, a "Yankee" customs officer, meets her and they become engaged. Wealthy "Yankee" lumber dealers begin driving the Acadian squatters off their lands. This causes great suffering, and rebellion breaks out among the peasants. Aldrich helps Representative Clifford to frame a bill, which, if passed by the Legislature, will enable the peasants to keep the land. But the bill is defeated. The bill is then introduced in the Senate, but is defeated there also. Aldrich then starts back in the night and is fired upon from ambush by unidentified persons. He returns the next day with his rifle. Hunters discover the body of Vetal Beaulieu in the woods near his home, close by the place where Aldrich was fired upon. Simple rifle shells are also found nearby. Rumor connects Aldrich's name with the murder of the old man. Aldrich goes before the Legislature to help Representative Clifford put through the land bill, but the bill fails. Aldrich returns north and is arrested for the murder of Vetal Beaulieu. The spring floods swell the rivers and the Sheriff cannot take Aldrich to jail.

## THEN READ THIS

WHEN morning broke, the clouds were still charging the snowbanks with lanes of the rain. Lightning ripped across the gray dawn, and thunder clanged above the hills. Thus Nature announced the ominous change of her winter mood.

It was that phenomenon of the northern latitudes that the weatherwise term "a January thaw." Most winters exhibit one such freak, but usually the winter takes prompt and new grip, and the rains freeze in the skies and the north winds blow the clouds away.

But this was more than the ordinary thaw.

The south winds held. The clouds remained low-hanging in the skies and were such saturated masses that their skirts dragged upon the tops of the domed hills.

That dread event was beginning which is on the records of the north as "the great flood of the St. John Valley."

There are times when Nature seems to make long and careful preparation for an orgy of damage. This year she had piled the snow, layer after layer, covering the fences, fluffing it in drifts on the hilltops, packing it in the ravines, a congealed flood that the winter's cold had dammed, but a flood that the rains now freed for mischief.

Aldrich found a discouraged sheriff when he entered the men's room of the tavern in the early morning. The county's officers were rasping stubby fingers through his beard and looking into the storm.

The highway was a wallow of soft snow. Streams were dashing down the gulches and eddying across the bridges and the culverts which were in sight from the tavern.

"It might be done on stilts or in a balloon," said the sheriff, "but not with horse or on our feet. We've got to stay here waiting for an officer who has his duty to perform, and for a prisoner who longed fiercely to face the charges of the law and rid himself of the burden of shame and the anxiety of delay.

Night came down on a drenched landscape, and the rain was still falling. During the long black hours it roared on the roof of Aldrich's head.

The first news of trouble came in the morning. A man had managed to struggle to the top of a sack of mail. He said that the ice was beginning to let go up-river where the waters were swifter and the pitch of the river steeper.

The rain did not cease. The south wind held. Old January's white beard was gone, and the water streamed down his bare face. The rivulets, grown to torrents, rushed from the hills upon the ice of the river. The chill was gone from the air. The ice was softened.

When night came on again hollow sounds rumbled from the breast of the river. They were the premonitory growlings of chaos getting ready to burst its bonds.

Aldrich knew the St. John Valley as few men of the section understood it. He had fared along the river's banks in all seasons and had studied the river's moods. He listened there under the roof in the night, and knew the menace that hovered above the little houses of the long road.

Where the roads climbed the high banks the houses would be safe. But the main settlements, the clusters of houses, were in the lowlands close to the river, on the alluvial meadows where the country was level and the soil was rich. With vision made clairvoyant by his fears he could behold what must be happening. The rising waters were cutting off the settlements from the hills. Meadows would become islands, isolated from the main by raging torrents that would sweep the base of the hills. Men would hope, would hesitate to brave the elements, and would delay to drag their women and children out of the shelter of the houses. That was more of that Gallic nature of constant hope and of all-day optimism which waits so long before it acts.

He heard the grind of the ice cakes as they started in the night. He

rose and dressed and walked in the tavern's office until the wet dawn stroked the east. He peered through the fogged windows and saw the tumbling torrent below. The first foetus of disaster was already sweeping past on its way to the sea. Mingled with the ice cakes were hay-ricks that had been torn from the meadows, debris of barns and the structures that the water had reached first, boat-houses and other frail trophies of the skirmish-line of the flood.

The sheriff found Aldrich at the window when he came down from his uneasy rest.

"This spells hell in capital letters," said the sheriff.

"It is only the beginning, Mr. Sher-

what wonder would he be absolved from the black doubt in his own mind? He ate without appetite when breakfast had been served; he paced listlessly, waiting.

"I reckon there comes some news of something," remarked one of the tavern's loungers. He pointed to a bateau which appeared, swirling down the river's brown tide. There were two men in it, and they managed to beach their craft through the ice-cakes and came hurrying up the street of the settlement.

"Oh, Messieurs," they shouted to those who hastened from the tavern, "who is there here to help the poor folks of the Beaulieu meadows? They have been waiting in their houses,

sting of a lash on Aldrich's self-control.

"I've given you my word. Accept my parole further while I obey this call."

"It isn't regular, and I can't do it." "You're afraid to go yourself, and you don't want your own cowardice to be shown up if I go alone," blazed the prisoner. He could not keep that speech back. His whole being had been crying out within him at the injustice of this arrest. Now he voiced his protest recklessly. The sheriff's surly refusal to act a man's part had driven him into a passion he could not control.

"It has been between us like gentle-



The sheriff ran after, raving and threatening

off. I know the conditions along this river. It's all right for us here on the highlands, but I couldn't sleep for thinking what the conditions must be in the settlements of the Beaulieu meadows. I'm afraid those people have been cut off before they realized their danger. I know they must have been cut off. Somebody ought to be organizing a relief party."

"I reckon it would have to be a relief party of angels—with waterproof wings at that," returned the sheriff, displaying no enthusiasm. "Ordinary human beings can't get anywhere this weather to rescue anybody. I can't even start out with you to take you to where you're going."

Aldrich turned from the window and paced the room, his mind again on his own bitter troubles after the sheriff had dropped the remark. To where he was going! That meant jail. There was no bail for the offense with which he stood charged by his enemies. It must be faced. He must reconcile himself to remain in jail until he could be purged by the torturing fires of public trial. Even his own consciousness of innocence faltered at times when he reflected on the situation in which circumstance had placed him. Somehow this arrest, this visible reaching of the law for his collar, seemed to sanction all the suspicion that had been directed his way. By

"Are you going to stand here and let those women and children drown?" demanded Aldrich, hotly.

They scowled at him, for there was a taint in his words and air.

"It is you, an officer, who could do much," entreated the spokesman. "You are known well on the border, M'eer Aldrich. You are a brave man. You do not lose your head as a poor Frenchman does."

"He can't go," snapped the sheriff, showing prompt alarm. "I've got particular reasons why he can't go, my men."

"Come with me, then; this is a call for help, and it's up to us as men," insisted Aldrich.

"I'm not taking any such chances. If there's going to be any traveling done it will be to where we're due." This cautious obstinacy was like the

hoping that the rains would stop. Now they have been cut off from the shore."

"You see I was right," stated Aldrich to the sheriff at his elbow.

"But that is not the worst," cried one of the messengers. "The ice has lodged in the Temiscouata narrows above Beaulieu. It has made a great dam there. It must give away, and then all the men and women and children will be drowned. The people do not know what to do. They are shouting and running about, and no one is a leader with a cool head. The folks will obey a leader. But there is no leader—no one who is brave and who understands. Is there not some man here who will come and command those who are willing, but who do not know?"

The listeners muttered among themselves. The fat landlord of the tavern shook his head, the sheriff grunted more of his doubts about any others except angels being able to assist, and no man stepped forward as a volunteer.

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If you're proposing to put it on another basis, go ahead—and see where you will wind up."

He added a sneer that the occasion did not call for but the young man's taunt of his cowardice could not go unchallenged.

"Go alone, say you? What do you think one man like you up there is going to amount to?"

"I'll show you, Mr. Sheriff," He turned and ran toward the tavern's stable.

The sheriff plunged after him, shouting. He tugged at his hip pocket. But he did not produce a weapon. He carried none. He dragged out a pair of handcuffs.

"You'll have to take your medicine now," he declared. "You've put it all on another basis."

Aldrich thrust the officer violently to one side and struggled with the girl's of his saddle.

He swung to his saddle, lay flat to escape the door's lintel, and galloped away.

The sheriff ran after, raving and threatening. But Aldrich leaped his horse into a ravine, water-choked, made the higher land, and sped north over the ledges from which the rains had stripped the winter covering.

His hard-won knowledge as a border rider served him in good stead in that chase to the north. In the past he had followed many a smuggler through the devious straggles of "The Pin Lane." There were places where he was obliged to swim his horse, but for the most part he gained his destination along the ridges, by paths he had known before.

At last he looked down on the turbid flood which encompassed the threatened homes of the Beaulieu still held

in the narrows above. The river was dangerously high, but it was not yet the tumbling, raging torrent that it would become when the Temiscouata narrows disgorged. He wondered how much time there was before this disaster would overwhelm all the valley.

Men had flocked on the highlands above the meadows. They told him that the jam was still packing higher and higher, and that it was groaning and rumbling, and that the great St. John was sending down its avalanches of ice and water and must prevail in the end.

Those men crowding around Aldrich, recognizing in this stalwart chap who had rushed up from the south one who understood how to command, bewailed the little they had been able to do.

"Two brave men who went out from this shore have already been drowned," they told him. "Jules Bourdreaux and Napoleon Sinclair, they have been drowned, for the ice beat against their bateau. We have not dared to launch more bateaux."

He gazed out on the rushing river. "It is useless to send bateaux," he told them. "Even if boatmen could reach the houses and take in the people the boats will be swept away down the river."

More men were arriving, many of them armed with still better horses. The customs officer became the center of a wistful band of farmers who muttered and chattered and stared at him and were barren of suggestions in that exigency. In times of stress men select a leader by instinct. And such a leader is obeyed because it seems to his followers that on him salvation is founded.

Aldrich knew of the slender resources of that region as well as he did the highlands and the byways. Desperate need made his wits nimble. On his way down the hills to the river he had passed one of the snubbing slopes of the river syndicate where loads of logs were eased down the mountain-side by means of great hemp cables.

(CONTINUED TOMORROW)

## THE LUXURY OF BOOKS

"Two fellows outside to see you, sir," said the batman. "Who are they?" "Robertson and Steever. Come for books again."

"Again? Send them in." The two aspirants after literary knowledge appeared.

"Have you anything to read, sir?" "You were here yesterday. You've read everything I've got."

"The postman says you got a parcel of books this morning." "I haven't read them yet."

"But you won't be reading 'em all at once, sir," they wheedled. "Realizing my defeat, I dragged the package from under the bed."

"Open that and see what you want." I inspected their selections—"Travels With a Donkey" and "An Inland Voyage."

"These? Well, take them if you like, but mind you read them." They departed, jubilant. Two days afterward they returned.

"Thank you, sir," said Robertson, placing the books upon the table. "Did you read them?" "I should think so. We read 'em both."

"What do you think of them?" "Good books. Take you right out of your life. Make you forget there was a war. Tell you, sir," Steever continued enthusiastically, "I seem to know the man who wrote them. Have you any thing else by him?"

"Nothing that would interest you—just essays. Take a look at these." They turned over the advanced "moderns" I offered.

"It's all the same to you," said Robertson, after a muttered colloquy. "If you've anything else by Stevenson we'd sooner read that. We seem to know him now and he does us good."

"I gave them 'Virginibus Puerisque' and 'Across the Plains.' In a week they are to judge between R. L. S. and the writers of today. I know what the verdict will be."

My two visitors are common English boys who have had an ordinary board school education, "leaving" at the age of thirteen to work in a factory. In the leisure spells of army life they have applied themselves to books. "Just to have the time away," as Steever says. But surely they have "the gift of reading," and they are not unique among their kind.—London Daily Mail.

## BALLADE OF DISCONTENT

'Twas ever thus from childhood's hour: Desires were greater than my pay. Whenever I had use for flour My dough would quickly fade away.

Hee-haw! If I could live on hay I'd see it rise with foul intent. Retailers' labor is to prey; And coffee's up another cent.

We're feeling prohibition's power. John Barleycorn has had his day. The water wagon in a shower Cold water throws on thoughts of gay.

And festive meets; acts as a stay On song and joyous argument— The drought affects my lifting lay And coffee's up another cent.

A plague on all reformers dour! A murrain on the spoozers gray Who on each dear indulgence glower; Who make December of each May!

Who grumble when the breezes play! Who raise the price of pleasure's bent! I cannot keep the blues at bay— And coffee's up another cent.

H. C. of L., your vain display Of strength disturbs my feelings pent. With woe I hear the wild ass Bray— And coffee's up another cent.

GRIF ALEXANDER.

# DREAMLAND ADVENTURES—By Daddy

"THE POISONED SWORD"

(The Mysterious Knight, challenged by King Bird to meet the Knight of the Poisoned Sword in knightly combat, is attacked by an elk.)

## Strange Things Happen

PEGGY was eager to run to the help of the Mysterious Knight in his battle with Big Horn, the elk. She knew, as the birds didn't, that the knight was Billy Belgium, and Billy, even though as brave as a man, was still only a boy. The elk towered above him and was far the stronger of the two. And while the knight's antlers couldn't pierce Billy's armor, if he could throw Billy to the ground he might be able to crush him.

Still Peggy knew that in knightly combat it would never do for a lady to go to the aid of her champion. So she sat tense and desperate watching the two as they thrashed about in the arena. The elk tried hard to shake Billy loose, but Billy wouldn't be shaken. Though the elk jerked him off his feet and swung him into the air, still he clung tight. Billy belatedly saw that he was no match in strength for the elk, and that he would have to use his wits, and use them quickly if he were to save himself before he became exhausted. So he edged closer and closer to a small tree at the edge of the woods. When they were almost upon it, he gave the elk a sudden shove and let go the horns. The elk, startled, reared and shook his antlers. Then he lowered them again and charged at Billy.

That was just what Billy wanted. He leaped to the side and the elk, as he came, smashed into the tree. Before the elk recovered from the shock, Billy jumped behind the tree and grasped the antlers at either side. Thus he held the elk fast, but with the trunk of the tree between them.

Much to Billy's surprise he found it very easy to hold the elk in this way. It was until afterward that he learned that one of the prongs of the antlers had sunk deep into the tree and become stuck there. Still the elk might have



When he bucked, the knight flew off his back

wrenched the prong loose but for the tightness of Billy's hold.

To Peggy and the birds it looked like a mighty tug-of-war on the opposite sides of the tree. When they saw that the elk could not budge, they cheered and cheered for the Mysterious Knight. The elk twisted and jerked with all the strength of his powerful body until it seemed as if something might give way. And something did give way, but not what Peggy, Billy, and the birds had expected. It was the antlers themselves. The elk gave one particularly vigorous twist and crack! the antlers snapped off his head.

Such a powerful jerk had the elk given, with his four feet all braced, that he sat down with a solid bump. But the elk wasn't particularly astonished at losing his horns. He was used to shedding his antlers every spring and had really been trying to get rid of them for several weeks. What amazed him was the far he got when he sat

Billy's brain worked fast. Letting go the antlers, he sprang for his sword, snatching it from the ground. Armed

with this he quietly advanced on the elk. But the elk, with his sharp weapons all gone, was not at all anxious to meet Billy's sword. He turned tail, prepared to fly. Billy prodded him with the tip of his sword, and with a grunt, the elk gave a startled leap that carried him into the forest. He had had all the fighting he wanted for that day.

"Hi y! King Bird," shouted the Mysterious Knight. "I have met and conquered the Knight of the Poisoned Sword!"

"Nay, that was not the Knight of the Poisoned Sword," responded King Bird. "Mount your gallant steed quickly, for my champion is about to get you to ride!"

At this word, the knight jumped upon his charger. All turned toward the forest—all except King Bird and his followers. They lifted the pear-shaped lump of clay, and flew with it until they were over the Mysterious Knight. Then they dropped it on his head. The lump broke into pieces and out of it appeared a small, fuzzy creature.

"The knight, thinking some one was throwing things at him, flashed indignantly around. Then, quickly, he began to duck his head, to dodge, and to wave his sword frantically around his head. It was as if he had gone suddenly crazy. And in a moment his gallant steed began to cut up queer antics. He shook his head, he pranced, he danced, he whirled, about, and he bucked. When he bucked, the knight flew off his head and landed on the ground. The knight's sword went in one direction and his helmet in another. With a bound, the knight jumped to his feet and thrashed about madly with his arms.

"Wheel! Wheel! I told you the Knight of the Poisoned Sword was a terror," exclaimed King Bird. "He will get under your armor!"

(In the next chapter will be told how the tables are turned on King Bird.)

# BRUNO DUKE, Solver of Business Problems

By HAROLD WHITEHEAD, Author of "The Business Career of Peter Flint," etc.

(Copyright)

## THE PROBLEM OF THE EMPTY MANSION

Accidents in a Well-Regulated Family

BY the middle of June visitors began to come to the Barracks. By the beginning of July every room in the place was taken. Thirty-six guests sat down to breakfast every morning—at dinner we often catered to seventy or eighty hungry humans, for the automobile brought us numbers of transient diners.

We charged a flatrate of \$20 a week for regular guests. Our \$1.50 chicken or lobster dinner was popular and profitable.

I learned quite a lot about the finances of running a hotel that summer I spent at the Barracks. Also I learned that while it looked very profitable on a casual observation, there were so many unexpected expenses that much of the anticipated (by me) profits vanished into the land of nowhere."

Oldham, the manager, laughed when I told him this and remarked that we'd want every nickel we could make to show any kind of a profit.

Another thing I learned about running a hotel is that whenever you think things are running smoothly something will break up the "happy home."

For instance, I'd found a leak in the upstairs narrow corridor which the plumber had some job in locating and fixing. He told me he would have to make a fresh connection.

The next morning we were startled by a fearful shriek from Mrs. Gainsborough's room. Her maid rushed out calling for "Cold water, cold water, cold cream, cold water!"

It seems that the plumber had somehow or other connected the hot and cold water pipes so that both faucets in her room supplied hot water. She had run some hot water into her bath, then turned on the cold water faucet for her usual time; without testing the water she hopped in—and out.

The result was a doctor's bill for patching up two scalded feet. We were fortunate not to have a lawsuit on our hands, but she was a "rock-ribbed Boston blue blood" who hated publicity.

Then there was the upset when the Kelly boys put soft soap in Uncle Moses' freezer. Uncle Moses was a very old colored man I'd hired for his looks!

Yes, I know it sounds funny, but Uncle Moses was a white-haired old chap who looked just like he'd stepped off the cover of a Kentucky plantation song sheet—all the women thought him "just an old dear."

Uncle Moses would sit under a big chestnut tree with the freezer between his legs and grind away to whatever tune he happened to be singing.

Sometimes he'd sing "Swanee River," and if no one stopped him we got no ice cream, for he'd draw it out so slowly and mournfully—so mournfully that he'd make himself cry—that the freezer handle made about four revolutions a minute.

After several similar experiences I suggested he sing "Marching Through Georgia" on such occasions—then we got action.

On this occasion I speak of the Kelly boys, two harum-scarum college boys, asked Uncle Moses to cut a piece of string for them. While he was away

they slipped soft soap into the ice cream.

At dinner that night we had the making of a first-class scrap. Some diners thought the peculiar taste was—arsenic! That caused several women to faint and there was clamoring for hot mustard and water—and Oldham's life!

I blamed him, he blamed the cook, the cook blamed Uncle Moses who "Swore to Gawd nuffin" was wrong unless there was bewitched by the change in the moon."

The Kelly boys finally confessed—but no one seemed to appreciate their idea of humor.

This was bad enough, but worse followed.

"TODAY'S BUSINESS QUESTION What is a 'bargain'?" Answer will appear tomorrow. ANSWER TO YESTERDAY'S BUSINESS QUESTION An "acknowledgment" is a receipt.

Business Questions Answered You may think my letter a bit selfish, and as this is a time of big things I would like a few words of advice from you.

In a large Wall Street trust company, employing about 400 clerks, our country was the newest man in the near top company, and the present time about five responsible positions were open to men leaving the company in the service and, to fill these positions, this company went outside and hired new men to fill these positions, thereby but not gratifying and dissatisfaction among the clerks.

I was during a brief lull in the peaceful conversation at the supper table that Mr. Bell astonished his wife and about thirty guests by saying "I am going to Boston tomorrow."

The Civil War veteran's wife, truly alarmed at this unusual statement, at once asked him to explain. He sat back in her chair with the air of one waiting for the solution of some mystifying puzzle. Her eyes rested on the bent, rather feeble figure of her husband, searching his wrinkled face for a sign that he did not mean what he said, but was merely joking. He looked so solemn, however, that she concluded he had set his mind on going.

"That's a long ways off, Pa—more than sixty miles. Why, you haven't been there these twenty years! I remember, because Lilly here was just starting at school, and she cried her eyes out to go along with you."

"I wanted to march, too," laughed Lilly, whose face was as fair and sweet as the lovely flower that her mother named her for.